

Managing Acute Respiratory Illness: A guide to Antiviral Medications

Residents of Aged Care facilities are particularly vulnerable to respiratory disease due to their health and care requirements, as well as their shared living arrangements and frequent contact with staff and visitors. Antiviral therapy may be a viable option to minimise the impact of these illnesses.

To manage individual resident risk, residential care facilities are encouraged to establish and document a pre-assessment for people at higher risk of severe disease to receive respiratory antivirals: [Pre-assessment action plan for respiratory infections in aged care facility residents](#)

INFLUENZA

Oseltamivir, an oral capsule formulation (marketed as *Tamiflu*)

Zanamivir, an inhaled formulation (marketed as *Relenza*)

- 5-day treatment course
- Treatment should commence within 48 hours of the onset of illness. Point-of-care (POC) tests can be performed to guide initial treatment while waiting for laboratory testing to return. NOTE: negative results should be treated with caution due to the low sensitivity of the antigen tests
- May require dose adjustment in renal impairment
- Prophylactic treatment may be recommended for close contacts in care community outbreaks.
- Side effects are generally mild and may include: nausea, vomiting, headache and gastrointestinal disturbances

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TREATMENT OPTIONS

COVID-19

Nirmatrelvir 300mg/ritonavir 100mg (Paxlovid™)

First-line treatment for patients with mild-moderate risk of progression to severe.

- 5-day treatment using a combination of medications (as separate tablets)
- Should be commenced as early as possible, but no later than 5 days after symptom onset.
- Requires dose adjustment in people with renal impairment
- Paxlovid™ interacts with many different medicines, including herbal supplements. Residents should be reviewed for potential interactions prior to charting. The [Liverpool COVID-19 drug interactions](#) checker can be used to assess this.
- Common side-effects include: diarrhoea, nausea, taste disturbance (metallic)

Molnuparivir 200mg (Lagevrio™)

First-line treatment for patients with mild-moderate risk of progression to severe.

- 5-day treatment course using up to 4 capsules twice daily to achieve the therapeutic outcome
- Should be commenced as early as possible, but no later than 5 days after symptom onset.
- Does NOT require dose adjustment in people with renal impairment
- Common side-effects include: diarrhoea, nausea, and dizziness